

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1           1.     A method of keeping a refreshed image from a camera on a user's  
2 system, the method comprising:  
3           sending the image to the user's system;  
4           refreshing the image periodically; and  
5           after a period of time, degrading the image.
- 1           2.     The method of claim 1, wherein the degrading comprises reducing  
2 an image size.
- 1           3.     The method of claim 1, wherein the degrading comprises  
2 decreasing resolution.
- 1           4.     The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
2           determining if it is time to degrade the image; and  
3           if it is time to degrade the image, degrading the image.
- 1           5.     The method of claim 4, wherein determining if it is time to degrade  
2 the image comprises determining that a set time has elapsed.
- 1           6.     The method of claim 4, wherein determining if it is time to degrade  
2 the image comprises determining that a window displaying the image is not  
3 visible to the user.
- 1           7.     The method of claim 1, wherein the determination whether to  
2 degrade the image is periodically evaluated.

1           9.     The method of claim 7, wherein the determination whether to  
2     degrade the image occurs concurrently with a refresh cycle.

1           10.    The method of claim 9, wherein if the determination indicates that  
2   the image should be degraded, upon refresh, the degraded image is loaded.

1        11.    The method of claim 7, wherein the determination whether to  
2    degrade the image is made when a timer reaches a preset value.

1        12.    The method of claim 7, wherein a determination whether it is time  
2    to degrade the image is made when a counter reaches a preset value.

1        13.     An apparatus comprising:  
2        a network connection to send an image to a user's system;  
3        a refresh logic to periodically refresh the image; and  
4        a degrading logic to degrade the image after a period of time.

1        14.    The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the degrading comprises  
2    reducing an image size.

1        15.    The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the degrading comprises  
2    decreasing resolution.

- 1           16.    The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:  
2           an activity monitor to determine if it is time to degrade the image; and  
3           if it is time to degrade the image, the refresh rate logic to degrade the  
4   image.
  
- 1           17.    The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the degrading logic determines  
2   if it is time to degrade the image by determining whether a set time has elapsed.
  
- 1           18.    The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the activity monitor determines  
2   if it is time to degrade the image by determining whether a window displaying  
3   the image is visible to the user.
  
- 1           19.    The apparatus of claim 16, wherein if the degrading logic  
2   determines that the image should be degraded, upon refresh, the refresh logic  
3   loads a degraded image.
  
- 1           20.    The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising a quality increase  
2   request monitor to reset the image to its original refresh rate upon detecting a  
3   request.
  
- 1           21.    The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the request is made by the user.